

LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF IDAHO
Sixty-third Legislature First Regular Session - 2015

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 16
BY HEALTH AND WELFARE COMMITTEE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
STATING FINDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND RECOGNIZING AND CONGRATULATING BENEWAH COUNTY AND ITS RESIDENTS FOR THE COUNTY'S CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY ON JANUARY 23, 2015.

Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

WHEREAS, by act of the Idaho Legislature, on January 23, 1915, Benewah County was created, named after Coeur d'Alene Chief Benewah and its county seat was placed at St. Maries; and

WHEREAS, from 1915 to 1924 Benewah County conducted operations in a school until the community passed a bond for a courthouse in January 1924. Construction began immediately at a cost of \$87,990, and since November 1924, the courthouse in St. Maries has been in continuous use for county and court functions. With its post-World War I neoclassical styling, the Benewah County Courthouse was listed on the National Register of Historical Places in 1987; and

WHEREAS, Benewah County has three incorporated cities. The largest, St. Maries, is home to 2,400 residents and is named for the largest tributary of the St. Joe River, which converges at the city. Plummer, the largest city within the Coeur d'Alene Reservation, is home to more than 1,000 residents. Tensed, population 80, is DeSmet spelled backwards, which the post office incorrectly transcribed; and

WHEREAS, several areas of Benewah County, though unincorporated, have rich histories and vibrant communities including Chatcolet, DeSmet, Emida, Fernwood, Parkline, Renfrew and Santa; and

WHEREAS, Benewah County is part of the historic homeland of the Coeur d'Alene Indians, who in their own language call themselves Schitsu'umsh, or "those who were found here" or "the discovered people." French trappers and traders were the first Europeans to encounter the Coeur d'Alene people and found them to be great traders, hence the name which means "heart of the awl." The Coeur d'Alene Tribe ranged over lands in northern Idaho, eastern Washington and western Montana. A portion of the present-day Coeur d'Alene Reservation is within Benewah County; and

WHEREAS, Benewah County is served by the Plummer-Worley School District and the St. Maries School District, with Lakeside High School in Plummer, home of the Knights, and St. Maries High School in St. Maries, home of the Lumberjacks. The St. Maries School District was ranked in the top ten schools in Idaho by U.S. News and World Report's education rankings; and

WHEREAS, timber and mining remain an important cornerstone of the regional and state economies. Each dollar of wood and paper products sold generates an additional 60 cents of sales by other industries within the state. Mills with facilities in Benewah County include the Potlatch Corporation and Stimson Lumber Company, and additional markets offered by Bennett Lumber and the Idaho Forest Group. Jack Buell Trucking and many owner-operated logging

1 and trucking companies keep the industry thriving and contributing to the
2 state's economy; and

3 WHEREAS, the St. Joe Ranger District of the Idaho Panhandle National
4 Forest was formerly the St. Joe National Forest, with the ranger district
5 office in St. Maries. With world-famous cutthroat trout streams, nation-
6 ally recognized elk herds, wild and scenic rivers, and roadless and prim-
7 itive areas, the St. Joe Ranger District has miles of trails for hikers,
8 backcountry horse riders, mountain bikers and ATV riders. The Emerald Creek
9 Garnet Area is one of only two places in the world where star garnets can be
10 found; and

11 WHEREAS, Benewah County is home to the oldest state park in the Pacific
12 Northwest, Heyburn State Park, founded in 1908 and named in honor of U. S.
13 Senator Weldon B. Heyburn. Close by is the Mary McCroskey State Park, named
14 after an early pioneer and dedicated to all pioneering women, it is known for
15 its unique position between the Palouse Prairie and the Rocky Mountains and
16 the breathtaking "Skyline Drive" that winds through cedar forest, ponderosa
17 pine and prairie; and

18 WHEREAS, a corner of the rich Palouse Prairie occupies Benewah County,
19 ensuring that farming and ranching remain traditional livelihoods. In ad-
20 dition to cattle, crops such as bluegrass, native grasses, wheat, barley and
21 hay are raised; and

22 WHEREAS, Benewah County is naturally beautiful and bountiful: lakes
23 and streams with trout and salmon; tree-filled forests with elk, moose, bear
24 and deer; mountains and meadows with huckleberries and camas roots; wetlands
25 with waterfowl and water potatoes; and

26 WHEREAS, Benewah County produced one governor, Charles Armington
27 "C.A." Robins, of St. Maries, the only physician to serve as Idaho governor
28 and the first governor elected to a four-year term, serving from 1947 to
29 1951. Prior to his service as governor, Governor Robins served as president
30 pro tempore of the Idaho Senate for the Twenty-seventh Idaho Legislature;
31 and

32 WHEREAS, Benewah County is home to the longest-serving county commis-
33 sioner in Idaho, Jack Buell, businessman and Idaho Hall of Fame inductee of
34 St. Maries. First elected in 1974, for more than 40 years he has worked tire-
35 lessly as a commissioner, community member and volunteer, sharing his re-
36 sources and lending a helping hand.

37 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the First Regular Ses-
38 sion of the Sixty-third Idaho Legislature, the House of Representatives and
39 the Senate concurring therein, that we hereby recognize and congratulate Be-
40 newah County and its residents for the county's Centennial Anniversary in
41 2015.